DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 082 747 JC 730 247

AUTHOR	Brossman, Sidney W.
TITLE	Access to Higher Education Through the Community Colleges.
INSTITUTION	California Univ., Los Angeles. ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Coll. Information.
SPONS AGENCY	National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Nov 73
NOTE	10p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Admission Criteria; *Community Colleges; *Higher Education; *Open Enrollment; Post Secondary Education; State Schools; *Student Needs; Technical Reports
IDENTIFIERS	*California

ABSTRACT

California's existing system of providing majority access to community colleges for all who desire to enter public higher education and limited access at the freshman level to the California State University and Colleges and to the University of California appears to be effective. The community colleges are well equipped to meet the needs that have resulted or will result from broader access. Attention should be focused, however, on the following existing problems: (1) financial barriers to transferring to a four-year college to complete baccalaureate degrees because of lack of funds to pay living expenses; (2) the need to modify existing admissions standards to include measures to identify minority group students who could be overlooked by traditional measures; (3) additional factors that should be considered in respect to controlled access to the lower division of four-year colleges are the student's ability to pay for his education and his racial and ethnic background, neither of which should preclude his being selected; (4) access is still inadequate in many rural areas and in some inner-city locations; (5) the need for more techniques to insure that potential students are aware of opportunities for postsecondary education, particularly for adults; (6) increased financial assistance to disadvantaged students. (DB)

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

ED 082747

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR JUNIOR COLLEGES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

THROUGH THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES

by

Sidney W. Brossman, Chancellor
California Community Colleges

The material in this publication was prepared pursuant to a contract with the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their judgment in professional and technical matters. Prior to publication, the manuscript was submitted to the Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges for critical review and determination of professional competence. This publication has met such standards. Points of view or opinions, however, do not necessarily represent the official view of opinions of either the Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges, or the National Institute of Education.

JC 730 247

University of California
Los Angeles

November 1973

Access to Higher Education
Through the Community Colleges

by

Sidney W. Brossman, Chancellor
California Community Colleges

Access to higher education in California has been one of the most important guarantees for the young people of this state. California is one of the nation's leaders in providing this opportunity for reaching the goal of universal access. In the California Community Colleges all high school graduates and others 18 years of age or older who can profit from instruction must be offered open access to higher education.

Concerning postsecondary objectives, postsecondary education should be offered to all California residents 18 years of age and older who are motivated and who have the capacity to undertake programs of instruction with both long-term and short-term objectives. No one should be excluded on the basis of age, race, sex, economic status or prior educational attainment.

On the Community College campuses there is a fundamental assumption that access to a comprehensive college constitutes "equality," provided that access to the total system of public higher education may be achieved through the Community Colleges. The Community Colleges provide a wide diversity of programs and services to all who seek an opportunity for postsecondary education. The designation of the Community Colleges as the primary institutions for initial access to higher education will work satisfactorily, however, only if access is guaranteed to programs beyond the Community Colleges for all who qualify to enroll in them.

The existing system of providing majority access to Community Colleges, for all who wish to enter public higher education, and with limited access at the freshman level to the California State University and Colleges and the University of California, appears to be working well. The present system of controlling freshman access to the University of California and the State University and Colleges by selective admission of students who have the highest probability of succeeding and of benefiting from such experience seems proper. The major groups who do not now have adequate access are members of minority groups, who are also poor, and residents of isolated areas.

Poverty and physical isolation are the major characteristics of people who lack access. The cost of attending a Community College is estimated about $1700, even for a student without dependents living at home. Transportation is a major expense, since few Community Colleges are adequately serviced by public transportation. Growth of enrollments in California's 96 Community Colleges has been so large and steady that few of those colleges have attempted recruitment programs, except for disadvantaged students for extended opportunity programs and services.

The Community Colleges are well equipped to meet the needs that have resulted or will result from broader access. Community College student bodies have always been very heterogeneous in respect to interests, talents, intellectual capacity, age, and socio-economic status. Since the advent of EOPS*,student bodies have increased still further in diversity, with enrollment of very large numbers of students from racial and ethnic minority groups. State EOPS funding has been very instrumental in increasing the capabilities of the Community Colleges to work successfully with disadvantaged students.

*Extended Opportunity Programs and Services

In respect to the responsibilities of the state and the segments of higher education to groups that have not had access to higher education, all segments of public higher education in a state should develop comprehensive statewide plans for access and determine the amount of state and local resources needed to achieve such access. The major feature of the plan should be an assessment of the unmet needs for access by those groups that do not have adequate opportunity for postsecondary education. The assessment should also include attention to the needs for access beyond Community College programs, that is, access to upper division, graduate, and professional programs. In particular, there needs to be attention to the financial barriers to access on the part of students who complete Community College programs while living at home but who lack funds to pay living expenses to enable them to transfer to a four-year college to complete baccalaureate degrees.

Open admissions policies and practices in the Community Colleges have worked well for California and should not be changed. However, attempts should be made to modify existing admissions standards to include measures to identify minority group students who could be overlooked by traditional measures.

Differentiation of functions is directly related to admissions standards. Community Colleges have the primary responsibility for lower division instruction, that is, for access to postsecondary education. With this function so assigned, it is proper for the Community Colleges to have open admissions. The other segments have been given responsibility for upper division and graduate instruction and should provide complete equality of access to transfer students from the Community Colleges.

The principle of controlled access is appropriate within the state's commitment to postsecondary education. There should continue to be open access to the Community Colleges and, through them, to the total system of public higher education. With about 930,000 students enrolled in California's Community Colleges and with about 50,000 Community College students seeking transfer to the other segments, a need to limit access to upper division does not exist.

In respect to controlled access to lower division in four-year colleges, the major criteria are the ability of students to succeed in the program and the likelihood that students will gain special benefit from it. Other factors which need to be considered are the student's ability to pay for his education and his racial and ethnic background. Neither of these factors should diminish the student's likelihood of being selected.

Access to postsecondary education has been achieved somewhat in the large metropolitan areas and in the suburbs. Access is still inadequate in many rural areas and in some inner city locations. In the metropolitan areas there is often multiple access to a variety of institutions and programs, for example, in the San Francisco Bay area, where there are State University, University of California, Community College and private college campuses where various students may enroll. Some suburbs have very adequate Community College facilities. Adequacy of facilities in the future is dependent upon the state's ability and willingness to contribute a fair share of the funding.

A problem in providing access in rural areas is that of establishing comprehensive Community Colleges in sparsely populated areas. Alternative delivery systems are currently in the developmental stages, and work is now under way by the Community Colleges to develop alternative models and delivery systems to assure that residents of rural areas will not be denied access if they lack funds to leave their area.

Some inner city residents are, in a sense, as isolated as residents of rural areas. There is a question whether to bring postsecondary education to inner city residents or to transport students where opportunity exists, including the housing of inner city students away from their own environment. Progress is being made in developing delivery systems for inner city residents, but there is still a long way to go before universal access is achieved for both rural and inner city use and for adults seeking postsecondary education.

There is a need for more techniques to insure that potential students are aware of opportunities for postsecondary education, particularly for adults. Studies have shown that peers have a greater influence on college attendance plans of young people than either high school counselors or adults. While most students will use their local Community College to gain access to postsecondary education, there is always an increasing need for information about career fields, levels of training required for the various fields, and opportunities to achieve career goals. Information about available financial aid to enter and continue in college is also needed continually, since students and their parents may not see materials prepared by the federal government relating to aid programs. Families with a college-going tradition seek out and obtain information to make wise choices of institutions, programs and financial aid. Where parents have not gone beyond high school, young people may not have access to proper information about opportunities for postsecondary education.

The state should be concerned about access to all forms of postsecondary education if the goal of universal access is to be achieved.

Independent higher education is already included in the state's policy for access in several ways and should continue to be. The major mechanism is the State Scholarship Program, which was established in part to facilitate

the enrollment of California youth in private institutions. The state has increased the number of scholarship awards in recent years, and there is an increasing percentage of high school graduates to whom such awards are made.

Access should be available initially and as often as an individual perceives a need for further education. Some students now entering college after high school might profit more from the experience if they were to postpone college for several years while getting experience in the non-school world. Similarly, some students would ultimately complete their degree programs if they were to stop out for about a year midway through their programs. Increasing attention is being given to adults whose education was interrupted for various reasons, and Community Colleges have taken the lead in California in respect to programs and services for adults who wish to resume their education and careers.

Community Colleges do not require a high school diploma to be held by students at least 18 years of age. A study is being completed concerning the success of high school dropouts in the California Community Colleges which shows that the performance and other characteristics of dropouts do not differ significantly from those of high school graduates in the same Community Colleges. Community Colleges are uniquely equipped to work with high school dropouts who are not fully prepared to undertake college work upon entrance. Furthermore, the broad spectrum of occupational programs insures that dropouts have real access to postsecondary education, that is, a realistic chance to succeed.

Community Colleges have always allowed students to enroll and drop when appropriate. Since Community Colleges must admit all students who apply, dropouts have not been penalized. Community Colleges are performing a real

service by admitting and assisting students who have encountered academic difficulty as lower division students in four-year institutions, often for personal reasons. Students who are required to leave a four-year college for reasons of poor grades may be admitted to a Community College for further work, either to make up the courses they failed in the other institutions or to embark upon an occupational curriculum. There is evidence that students who make up their deficiencies in the Community Colleges do satisfactory work after re-entering a four-year institution.

The federal government has initiated one new program which alternates study and service in the community. Students take a year away from their studies in service to the community for which they receive academic credit and a stipend. Still another program of community service is to be proposed to Congress under which young people will be able to earn a kind of G.I. educational benefit for college by civilian service to the communities. Planned stop-out before college is wise for many.

Business and labor should also permit employees to undertake continuing education programs on company time. In addition, funds might be provided by business and labor for books, materials, and tuition and fees, if the employee is in a lower income bracket and in a position where his educational program will contribute to his upgrading on the job. Community Colleges are doing much to provide continuing education for workers at all levels, usually on an individually enrolled basis.

There need not be conflict between universal access and quality education if the state and local communities work together to provide such access through the Community Colleges. California now has high quality education in the Community Colleges with better access than any other state. However, local

districts will not be able to provide additional access without increased state aid. The help of the state is critically needed in respect to increased state share in the financing of Community Colleges. If a decision were made to provide universal access through the University of California and State University and Colleges, there would be a real danger of diminishing quality by spreading the state's fiscal resources too thin.

California provides universal access to postsecondary education by assigning the Community Colleges major responsibility for initial access and by concentrating the University of California and State University and Colleges upon upper division and graduate instruction, to which Community College transfer students must have equal access. The method of planned accommodation within the higher education system appears to produce greater benefits for both the student and society than free or limited access to the total system.

The state should continue to provide universal rather than limited access to higher education, with the Community College providing the major vehicle for initial access. The question then becomes one of the state's role in financing universal access. The state is now contributing about 42 percent of the financing of Community Colleges (an improvement over past years) and should contribute a greater share as rapidly as possible.

In addition, the state has also begun a modest program of assisting disadvantaged students in the Community Colleges by providing funds for grants and loans and for educational services and special counseling. However, only a small portion of disadvantaged students is now being served.

The Community Colleges have open admissions policies and, therefore, admit high school dropouts who apply. Admissions standards for the University of California and State University and Colleges are mostly objective; that is,

they leave little room for interpretation except in the case of students admitted as exceptions. Admission is on the basis of grades and/or test scores at the freshman level in the University of California and State University and Colleges, with admission to the segment (if not the preferred campus) guaranteed if the objective standards are met. The system appears to make it possible for high school students and counselors to know whether students will be admissible to a segment where access is controlled.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

NOV 21 1973

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION